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SUBJECT: 1954 HAGUE CONVENTION AND SECOND PROTOCOL STATES PARTIES  
MEET AT UNESCO

11. SUMMARY: THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES OF THE 1954 HAGUE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT HELD THEIR EIGHTH MEETING IN PARIS ON NOVEMBER 23. THE UNITED STATES, WHICH RATIFIED THE CONVENTION IN MARCH, PARTICIPATED AS A PARTY FOR THE FIRST TIME. THIS MEETING WAS FOLLOWED BY THE THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL TO THE 1954 CONVENTION. THE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATED AS AN OBSERVER AT THAT MEETING. THE UNESCO SECRETARIAT REVIEWED THE STATUS OF RATIFICATIONS OF BOTH TREATIES AND REPORTED ON FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TAKEN WITH REGARD TO PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE STATES PARTIES, INCLUDING INFORMATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1954 HAGUE CONVENTION IN RECENT ARMED CONFLICTS. THEY ALSO DESCRIBED ACTIONS TAKEN BY UNESCO TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON THE CONVENTIONS AND REPORTED ON THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF HOLDING THE MEETINGS.

THE STATES PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL ENDORSED THE GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND PROTOCOL, ADOPTED GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE USE OF THE FUND FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT AND ELECTED SIX NEW MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE EVENT OF ARMED CONFLICT. END SUMMARY.

12. THE SECRETARIAT ANNOUNCED THAT THERE ARE NOW 123 STATES PARTIES TO THE HAGUE CONVENTION AND 55 TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL. THE FIRST PROTOCOL HAS 100 PARTIES. SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE 1954 CONVENTION, FIVE STATES HAVE JOINED, INCLUDING BAHRAIN, CHAD, CHILE, NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES. THERE ARE SEVEN NEW STATES PARTIES TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL, INCLUDING BAHRAIN, BARBADOS, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, CHILE, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ITALY AND JORDAN.

13. THE SECRETARIAT ALSO PROVIDED INFORMATION ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION AND PROTOCOLS. THEY SAID THAT NATO HAD REPORTED THAT IN THEIR OPERATIONS, NATO MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE GUIDED BY THE RELEVANT PRINCIPLES PROTECTING CULTURAL PROPERTY UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW AND WHEN DRAFTING DIRECTIVES AND RULES OF ENGAGEMENT, DUE ATTENTION IS GIVEN, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO EXTEND PROPER PROTECTION TO CULTURAL PROPERTY. THE SECRETARIAT ALSO SAID THAT FOLLOWING THE CONFLICT IN AUGUST 2008, BOTH GEORGIA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION REPORTED THE DAMAGE TO OR DESTRUCTION OF SEVERAL HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS IN THE SOUTH OSSETIA REGION. THE SECRETARIAT REMINDED THE PARTIES OF THE OBLIGATIONS TO COMPLY WITH THE 1954 CONVENTION, THE 1954 PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION AND THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION. THE SECRETARIAT FURTHER NOTED THAT THE RECENT REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL FACT-FINDING MISSION ON THE CONFLICT IN GEORGIA, ESTABLISHED BY THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL'S DECISION 2008/901/CFSP OF 2 DECEMBER 2008, INCLUDES SEVERAL ALLEGATIONS OF DAMAGE CAUSED TO CULTURAL MONUMENTS, MUSEUMS OR CHURCHES DURING THE WAR BETWEEN GEORGIA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

14. THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION SAID THAT RATIFICATION OF THE 1954 CONVENTION IS AN IMPORTANT SYMBOL OF U.S. COMMITMENT TO PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY AND DESCRIBED DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE U.S. TO THIS END, THE UNITED STATES HAS ESTABLISHED ITS FIRST U.S. COMMITTEE OF THE BLUE SHIELD (USCBS) AND JOINED OTHER NATIONS IN ESTABLISHING THE ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL COMMITTEES OF THE BLUE SHIELD (ANCBS). THE USCBS HAS COMMITTED TO ASSISTING IN TRAINING DEPLOYING SOLDIERS AND CIVIL AFFAIRS OFFICERS AND WILL WORK WITH THE ANCBS TO IDENTIFY

OTHER PLACES WHERE EXPERTS IN CIVIL SOCIETY CAN ASSIST OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL IN PROTECTING THE MOST IMPORTANT CULTURAL HERITAGE OF MANKIND FROM THE RAVAGES OF WAR. THE US MILITARY'S CENTRAL COMMAND HAS ESTABLISHED A MULTINATIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY ADVISORY TEAM FOR THE COMMAND'S ONGOING OPERATIONS AND IS PUBLISHING MATERIALS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS AND CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS WHICH STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING CULTURAL PROPERTY.

15. STATES PARTIES TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL ELECTED SIX NEW MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR DESIGNATING CULTURAL PROPERTY ELIGIBLE FOR ENHANCED PROTECTION AND ADMINISTERING THE FUND ESTABLISHED BY THE PROTOCOL. ITALY, ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, ROMANIA, AND SWITZERLAND WERE ELECTED ON THE FIRST BALLOT. IRAN WAS CHOSEN OVER LIBYA ON THE SECOND BALLOT FOR THE SIXTH FOUR-YEAR TERM.

16. STATES PARTIES TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL ENDORSED GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND PROTOCOL THAT HAD BEEN DRAFTED BY THE COMMITTEE OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, WITHOUT MODIFICATION. THE STATES PARTIES MEETING THEN DEVELOPED AND ADOPTED GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF THE FUND, INCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE TO PRIORITIZE EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPING NATIONS.

17. THE NETHERLANDS ANNOUNCED THE FIRST "SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION" TO THE FUND ESTABLISHED FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY IN ARMED CONFLICT. THE MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL CONCLUDED WITH A RESOLUTION URGING STATES TO BEGIN SUBMITTING NOMINATIONS FOR ENHANCED PROTECTION AND URGING THE COMMITTEE AND THE SECRETARIAT TO IDENTIFY UNSPECIFIED "SYNERGIES" BETWEEN OTHER UNESCO-SUPERVISED CONVENTIONS AND PROGRAMS REGARDING CULTURAL PROPERTY. THE NEXT MEETING FOR BOTH THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION AND STATES PARTIES TO THE SECOND PROTOCOL WILL BE IN 2011.

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